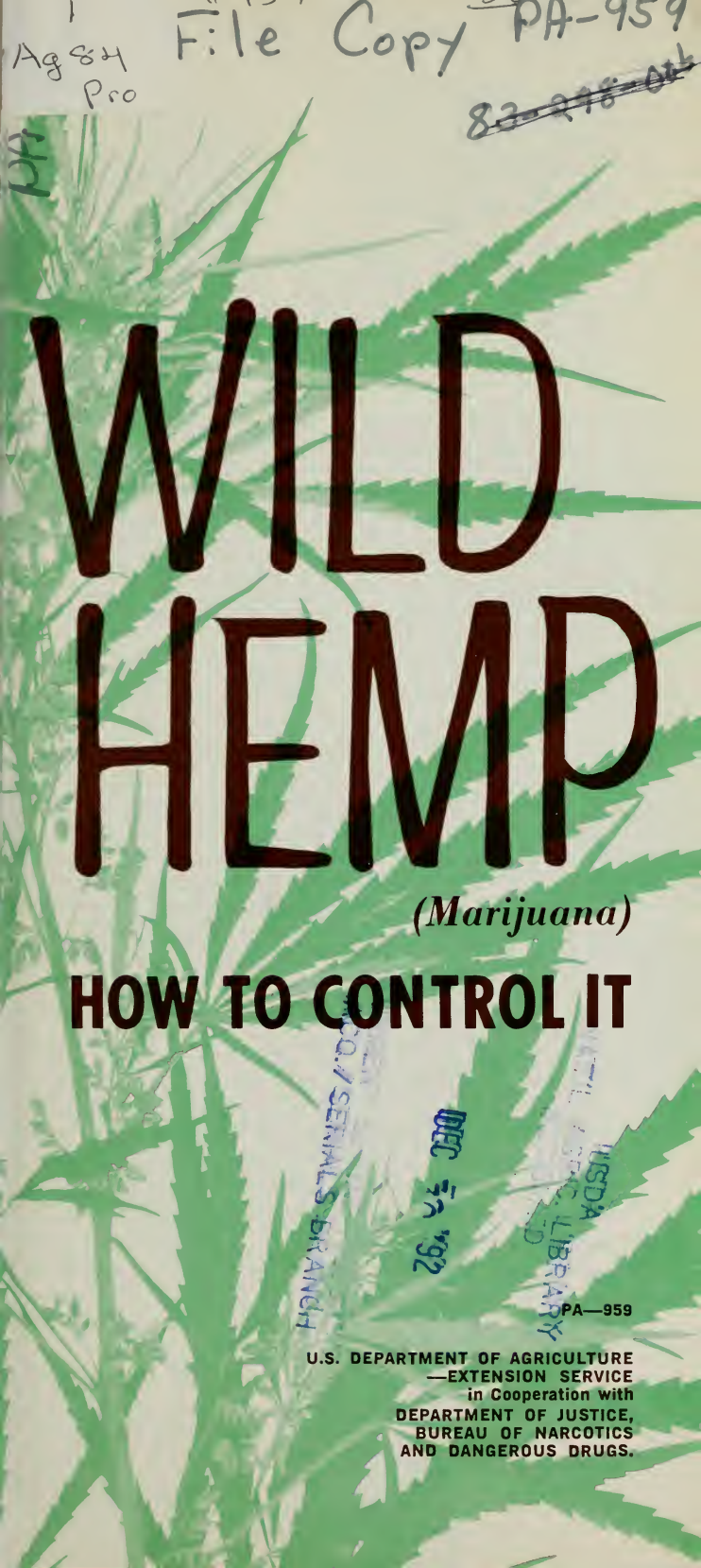


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



1
Ag 84
Pro

File Copy PA-959
~~83-278-014~~

PA

WILD HEMP

(Marijuana)

HOW TO CONTROL IT

CO. / SERIALS BRANCH
DEC 7 1992
USDA
LIBRARY
PA-959

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
—EXTENSION SERVICE
in Cooperation with
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
BUREAU OF NARCOTICS
AND DANGEROUS DRUGS.

WILD HEMP

Wild hemp (*Cannabis sativa* L.) is a weed which contains powerful hallucinogenic compounds called tetrahydro-cannabinols. Although wild hemp may not be lawfully cultivated without special license, it grows wild in many parts of the United States. It is from this plant that the drug marijuana is prepared for illegal distribution and sale.

Marijuana abuse has increased and is now a major menace. It is the most common form of drug abuse, and it frequently leads to dangerous forms of addiction and dependence. Its sale provides profit to criminals at the expense of society.

One way to reduce this illegal traffic is to eliminate wild hemp. Eliminating the plant will reduce trespassing by lawless persons in search of sources and will serve the public interest.

This leaflet tells how wild hemp can be controlled.

Wild hemp, also called marijuana, grows on many kinds of soils—often in moist lowlands. It is usually found in uncultivated areas such as abandoned fields, on ditch banks, in fence rows, and along railroad tracks.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

The wild hemp plant dies each year and new plants grow only from seed. At maturity it is usually 4 to 7 feet tall, but it may grow to 15 feet. (Fig. 1). The coarse, somewhat grooved stem can vary in diameter from about one-half to two inches and appears four-sided. (Fig. 2). Normally the plant is branched, but under crowded growing conditions it will usually be single stemmed with foliage primarily at the top. It has a branched tap root about 8 inches long. (Fig. 3).

The surface of the plant is covered with a mass of tiny hairs difficult to see without magnification.

The compound leaves on the lower part of the plant grow opposite each other. (Fig. 4). The upper leaves are smaller, have fewer leaflets and are arranged alternately on the stem. The compound leaves are made up of 3 to 11 leaflets—almost always an odd number—usually 7. The center leaflet is the largest and varies from 2 to 6 inches long. (Fig. 5). The leaflets are dark green on top and lighter on the bottom. The edge of the leaflet is sawtoothed (Fig. 6), and the surface is slightly sticky. Plants have a distinctive odor.

Some hemp plants are male, others female. It is difficult to determine the sex until they bloom. The male plants bear very small (about 1/8-inch across), greenish-yellow flowers near the top. (Fig.

7). After the male flowers shed their pollen the plant turns yellow, withers and dies.

The flowers on the female plants are smaller and are attached to the main stem just above the leaf. (Fig. 8). After pollination the female plant becomes bushy and heavy with seed. It may remain green and vigorous until frost. The mature seeds are formed inside a hull which is easily removed. They are a mottled, brownish gray color and are clam shaped with an encircling ridge.

CONTROL

Since wild hemp is an annual, reproducing only by seed, it is important to prevent seed production. Pulling or hoeing is the most practical method of controlling a few scattered plants. Tillage or repeated close mowing are effective while the plants are young.

Herbicides provide simple, low cost control especially where mowing or tillage are not practical. One of the most economical and effective herbicides is 2,4-D. Spray the plants when they are young, growing, and not more than 24 inches high.

For best results, one pound of 2,4-D should be mixed with 20 to 40 gallons of water for each acre to be treated. One pound of 2,4-D is equivalent to one quart of 2,4-D concentrate containing 4 pounds of active ingredient per gallon.

More mature plants are difficult to control and require higher rates of 2,4-D.

Before spraying, note the precautions on the 2,4-D label to avoid injury to nearby desirable plants.



FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2



FIGURE 4



FIGURE 3





FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

FIGURE 7



FIGURE 8



CAUTION

Before spraying, note the directions and precautions on the 2,4-D container label to avoid injury to nearby desirable plants, as well as possible harm to humans, livestock, fish, and wildlife. Store the chemical in its original container under lock and key—out of the reach of children and animals—and away from food and feed.

Do not clean spray equipment or dump excess spray material near ponds, streams, or wells. Because it is difficult to remove all traces of herbicides—such as 2,4-D—from equipment, do not use the same equipment for insecticides or fungicides that you use for herbicides.



Use Pesticides Safely
FOLLOW THE LABEL

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

July 1970